

INTERVIEW: DOROTHY RICHARDSON

- Subject: Dorothy Richardson
- Occupation: Retired bank teller
- Interviewer: Mark Junge
- Date: 1-30-92
- Place of Interview: Richardson's Eaton apartment, Cheyenne, Wyoming
- Transcriber: Bess Arnold
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[Transcriber's notes: I have deleted redundant ands, "er"s, "uh"s, "but"s, "you know"s, false starts, feedback and non-verbal sounds if it does not affect the conversation. I have used an em dash (—) to indicate a break in a sentence, resumption of a statement after an interruption, or an incomplete sentence. Brackets are used for non-verbal sounds, deleted words, and for reference to pertinent data.]

SIDE A

Junge: Today is the 30th of January, 1992. My name is Mark Junge and I am in the home of Dorothy Richardson, rather her apartment, I should say, here at the Eaton. What's the address here, Dorothy?

Richardson: 301 East 21st Street

Junge: 301 East 21st Street, right south of the old, or historic, Governor's Mansion in Cheyenne. And today what we're going to do over tea and shortbread—it's a great winter day, a wonderful, warm winter day—and we're going to talk this morning a little bit about Dorothy's life, coming to Wyoming, a little bit about her Scottish background, the Scots in Wyoming, and talk a little bit about the Robert Burns statue and miscellaneous things, how does that sound, Dorothy?

Richardson: Sounds fine.

Junge: Well, to begin with, I usually ask people their full names, for one, and where and when they were born, exactly.

Dorothy: Alright. My full name is Dorothy Irene Richardson, born in Edinburgh, 1922.

Junge: What date?

Richardson: Fifth of February.

Junge: In Edinburgh.

Richardson: Edinburgh?

Junge: Now, how do you spell Edinburgh?

Richardson: E-d-i-n-b-u-r-g-h, Edinburgh. [she pronounces it “Edinburra”]

Junge: B-o-r-

Richardson: No, B-U-R-G-H. Burgh [burra] is the Scottish for a city or a town. Edinburgh was named for King—let me see now, one of the Scottish kings, which one was he called after? But the King of Edinburgh, town of Edin. Edinburgh.

Junge: Okay. And your parents' names?

Richardson: My father's name was Walter Richardson. My mother's name was Mary Agnes Millicent Irene Hugh Jones Richardson.

Junge: [Laughs]. That's pretty good.

Richardson: Mami for short. M-a-m-i, her initials.

Junge: What is your lineage or your ancestry? Are they hard-working peasant people, are they royalty, aristocracy?

Richardson: No, they are probably from the borders, from the border country, which is down in Selkirkshire. My father and his two brothers and my grandfather and great-grandfather were all born around Galashiels, which is a mill town and the majority of them were in the wool and mill business. My great-grandfather was an engineer in the mills.

Junge: They're working class people.

Richardson: Right. Mm-hmm.

Junge: I see. Is your lineage, then, pure Scots?

Richardson: No. Me, I've got a spot of Welsh in me.

Junge: Okay.

Richardson: It's still Celtic, we're Celts.

Junge: Okay.

Richardson: Together the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh are the Celtic race.

Junge: But as far as the tribes were concerned, there was the Picts and the Scots.

Richardson: The Picts were the original people in Scotland as far as we know. Over in Ireland were the Scots. A little further south you get the—there were Scots as well, they were a mixture. The Scots came, a lot of them came over from Ireland. There were Scots already in the western part of Scotland. And under—I'm trying to think of the name of the king—the very first one who was a Scot, and raised the Scots with Picts, and everybody else together and really made the nation of Scotland. But we've got some Anglo in us because people came from northern England. And they had come from Wales. And they originally had been Saxon who'd been pushed north by the Normans from France who came in from Scotland to get the Danish—the Norse coming from Scotland—that came all the way around from Scotland. So you've got a lot of Norse.

Junge Have you done a lot of genealogical work?

Richardson: Not very much.

Junge: You're not interested in that?

Richardson: I'm interested but, you know, it's really funny when you're gone from a country two or three generations. That's when you start to dig back. But [laughs] when you're Scot, you're Scot, you know. You're not going to go back any further. You know you came from there.

Junge: [Laughs]. You don't dig into all that.

Richardson: I don't dig into it. I can go back into the seventeen hundreds, and my great-great-grandparents, and they were all Scots—were all from the border country. People aren't that interested. It's when you go away to another country and you're, as I said, the second or third generation, then you start to dig back.

Junge: Why do you suppose that's so?

Richardson: Oh, I suppose it's because it was in the country of your birth and your parents, your grandparents, your great-grandparents, your great-great-grandparents all came from the same place, so you have somewhere to go back to.

Junge: Okay, but when you come over to America why do you take such an interest in the old country?

Richardson: Particularly the Scots people. They say you're more Scots once you leave Scotland because you suddenly realize what your heritage is. Over there you take it for granted, but once you leave you become very, very proud of being Scots. So you try to keep your heritage alive. You talk about it more.

Junge: What about those people, though, Dorothy, who say once you're in America, you should be American?

Richardson: We are American. We're Scots-Americans. We're proud to be American because we chose to be American. We often think—when I came to this country first we ran into, well, I suppose you'd call it prejudice now—but people would say to me when I would talk about Scotland, they'd say, "Well, why did you come over here?" And I said it was opportunity for a new life and they'd say, "Well, why do you always talk about Scotland?" And I'd say, "Yes, because that's where I was born. That is my roots," And they'd say, "Oh, you should go back there." [unintelligible] and I said, "When I became an American, I was probably a better American than an American-born because I chose to be an American. But I'm not going to forget my heritage. This is why, when I do the thing with the children up in the museum and I do the Indian programs, I always ask them if any of them have Indian blood in them. Be very proud of that heritage, 'cause they are the original people of this country. The rest of us all came from somewhere else."

Junge: Right, but I'm thinking that there are people in this country who say—especially when they talk about the Vietnamese or Hispanics—

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: I'm referring especially now to this argument about English as a second language.

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: Maintaining the Hispanic traditions, maintaining the Hispanic language. And people say, "No, once you come to America, you should drop those things that you had and become an American."

Richardson: No, you become an American because you chose to be an American. But don't forget where you came from.

Junge: Why?

Richardson: Don't forget your roots.

Junge: Why?

Richardson: If we do thi, we've lost everything, really. Okay, I'm asking you—where did your folks come from?

Junge: Well, I'm fourth generation, at least, maybe fifth generation, born in America from Germany. We came from Germany.

Richardson: Okay, but aren't you interested in things from Germany?

Junge: I'm fifth generation removed, maybe.

Richardson: Wouldn't you like to go back and see where your great-great-great grandfather or grandmother came from?

Junge: Not especially.

Richardson: Not especially.

Junge: No, I would, of course I would.

Richardson: Of course you would. We'd all like to do that.

Junge: What if I told you not especially? What would you say to that?

Richardson: I would say you're not interested in your roots. We all came from somewhere and isn't that nice to have an interest in what we started out as?—why your great-great grandfather came to this country. Why didn't they stay where they were born? The Scots have always been wanderers, always, from way, way back. You'll find Scotsmen all over the world and wherever they go they leave a mark because they're that kind of people.

Junge: What kind of a mark?

Richardson: They're very hard working, that's part of their heritage. They never forget they were Scots and they leave a mark on the country where they've been. Look at this country. Everybody's heard of Andrew Carnegie. He came out here as a very young man because there was opportunity in this country. He made a fortune. He went back to Scotland, but he never forgot this country he came to that gave him the opportunity. How many towns and cities in this country have a Carnegie Library? We had a beautiful one here which they tore down. Okay?

Junge: The first in the country.

Richardson: Right. Many of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were Scots and Scots-born. [Unintelligible] [John] was Witherspoon and he was a minister from the tiny, wee village called Gifford south of Edinburgh.

Junge: Why, Dorothy, is it so important to avoid this homogeneity in the population and why not just have all McDonalds from coast to coast—all one homogeneous population? Why is it so important to maintain our separate cultural roots, separate identities, I guess.

Richardson: We're not keeping them separate. We're just reminding ourselves of it. I'm an American and very proud to be an American, but I'm also very proud of my Scottish birth and heritage. I'm not going to forget that 'cause that's what makes me a good American.

Junge: I think so, too. I think so, too. I'm agreeing with you. I think that it is important.

Richardson: Right. Look at these young people who have come from the Asian country. They take advantage of what this country will give them. So many of these children, you see them—they've got scholarships, they're going to universities, but they have had to work hard for it because they didn't have the money to start with. They've worked for it. They've taken jobs. They've studied. They really worked at it to learn English to take advantage of the things that are given them in this country and, unfortunately, so many of the people who were born here don't take advantage of it.

Junge: Do you think we have something to learn from immigrants?

Richardson: I think we do. I think we do.

Junge: What do you think would be the lesson?

Richardson: To take advantage of education that is offered in this country. To take advantage of the freedoms that we're given. People take it for granted.

Junge: Too much so, do you think?

Richardson: I think so.

Junge: Even in this day and age?

Richardson: Even in this day and age. How many people go to the polls to vote? I was here five years before I could vote and I became a citizen. I put in my first

papers right after I came to this country. It took me five years to get them and all those five years I could not vote. Now I never miss a vote. That's why I became a citizen for. I came to this country to become a citizen, to take part in it.

Junge: Do you think we become sort of a static culture without immigrants?

Richardson: I think we would. I think we need the stimulation. It makes people—we get into trouble: "Where are all these people that take jobs from us?" But these people have come and they have made an effort. They're doing jobs which Americans could do, but don't want to do because it's too low paying, it's beneath them.

Junge: You've got a good work ethic, don't you?

Richardson: Yes. My grandfather always told me: "You give a good days work for what you're paid." I've always done that.

Junge: This is your Grandfather Richardson?

Richardson: My Grandfather Richardson.

Junge: Why did you come to this country? What were the circumstances?

Richardson: Well, I came after the Second World War. Britain—we won the war. Well, I suppose—but after many, many years of privation, many of my friends were killed during the war including my young man I was engaged to be married to, and I wanted a new start. I had an aunt and uncle who lived here in Cheyenne, and they had always written and my aunt had made quite a few visits over. My uncle had made one visit over and it seemed like a wonderful country to come to, to make a new start. I came directly. My aunt met me in New York. We took about ten days to come across the country to Cheyenne.

Junge: What year was that?

Richardson: 1947.

Junge: What were your impressions coming to America?

Richardson: New York—oh, so many people, all in such a hurry. And marvelous food.

I'll tell you a funny story. I got just about a week's notice to sail. I was supposed to come in January, 1947. I had all my papers ready to go. I had my passage which I paid for, and about three days before I was ready to sail it was cancelled so the G.I. bride could have my passage. She was

coming over for free. I had to wait until April until they told me I had a passage to come. I sent a wire to my aunt here. There wasn't a telephone, transcontinental telephone in those days. I sent a wire to her in Cheyenne. I had no idea whether she would meet me in New York or not. She'd always said she would be right there at the gangplank to meet me when I came. And she'd also told me that she had made reservations in a hotel in New York and they would hold it until she actually told them, "I'm going to be there." When I got off that ship, when the immigration people questioned me, "Are you going to be met?" I said, "I think so." They said, "What do you mean, you think so?" I said, "I had to send a wire to Wyoming. There was no time for me to get a reply back, but I expect my aunt to be meeting me." So, I came off the gangplank and there she was standing waiting for me. The first evening we were in there—in those days you could kinda' wander around New York without any fear. And our hotel was uptown, and about two blocks away there was a little delicatessen, and it was in the evening, and we went past the window and here was this great big roast turkey in the window and all this food and, of course, my nose was pressed up against it. I couldn't believe all this food. I'd been on rationing for seven years and Auntie said, "We can go in and get some of this turkey and take it up to the room and have a little picnic." In we go—and all this marvelous food in that store. There was oranges, there was apples, there was bananas, which I hadn't seen for seven years. All this glorious food. I said, "Oh, look at this, oh, look at this." I'd go from place to place, I couldn't believe it. And there was a great big guy behind the counter and he was watching me all the way. I don't know if he thought I might lift something. Eventually made up my mind what we wanted, and we went up and Auntie ordered everything. And he says to her, "Where did she come from?" And Auntie said, "Oh, she just arrived from Scotland this morning." He says, "Oh, she's a smart girl. One day in America and already, maybe, she talks the English language."

Junge: [Laughs].

Richardson: He was a lovely Italian if ever there was one. A lovely story.

Junge: That's cute. Did you stop at Ellis Island first?

Richardson: No, I didn't have to 'cause I was being met.

Junge: I see.

Richardson: I had all my papers. I had all my immigration papers.

Junge: How long did you stay in New York?

Richardson: About a week.

Junge: Did you visit and look at things?

Richardson: Yeah, to see everything.

Junge: Did you go by the Statue of Liberty?

Richardson: Oh, you bet. Went up the Empire State Building.

Junge: You know, to the early immigrants, earlier than you—twenty-five to fifty years at least—the Statue of Liberty really meant something. Did that have an impression on you?

Richardson: Oh, yes. I've got pictures I took as I came past very early in the morning.

Junge: Did you have thoughts about it at the time?

Richardson: I just thought: "I'm here."

Junge: Were you really aware that there was a great change now going to take place in your life?

Richardson: Oh, of course I knew it. I was leaving everybody that I knew.

Junge: Why didn't your whole family, why didn't your friends come over? Why did you?

Richardson: Well, my father, of course, had spent all his life—he was a naval officer—spent thirty-five years or more in India. My mother died when I was about two. My grandparents had brought me up. Many of my school friends did leave after the war to go to different parts of the world.

Junge: So you had this wanderlust in you?

Richardson: Yes, I had the wanderlust in me, and when I talked it over with my father he said, "You have my blessing. Go." He said, "But I have one stipulation. You ought to make a success of this. If you get homesick, don't write for me for money to bring you back. Earn it."

Junge: And, of course, you agreed to that.

Richardson: You bet I did. It took me nine years to earn enough money to go home for the first time. [laughs]

Junge: How long?

Richardson: Nine years.

Junge: Nine years. Have you traveled a lot around the world?

Richardson: Yes. Went to India with my father

Junge: He was a civil servant?

Richardson: No. He was a naval officer. The first navy attached to the Indian Navy.

Junge: So, you have seen a little bit of the world.

Richardson: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Junge: I would imagine it would further enhance your appreciation of this country.

Richardson: Yes, absolutely. And I've been a few places in Europe when I was in boarding school. Easter holidays we would go over to France, to Paris. The minute you left British soil you had to speak French. That was part of our education.

Junge: Could you?

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: Do you still speak more than one language?

Richardson: I understand French and I can read it but I couldn't speak it anymore. I haven't used it for over forty years. The grammar is gone but I'm sure if I was dumped in the middle of France with nobody around me speaking English the vocabulary would come back and I would get where I was going.

Junge: Mm-hmm. Did you have a strong—what would you call it—brogue, when you came over? That's an Irish term, but I know it might apply here.

Richardson: Yes, I suppose so. A little bit stronger than it is now. 'Course, I go back every two years. When I'm in Wyoming, Scotland is home. When I'm in Scotland, Wyoming is home. I've got the best of two worlds.

Junge: Do you immediately fall into another accent when you get home?

Richardson: Well, because I'm hearing it around me. But the people over there, my friends, of course, and my relatives—it doesn't bother them. But strangers

say, "You're American. Where are you from?" They don't hear the Scottish accent.

Junge: 'Cause it's been washed away.

Richardson: It's been washed away a little bit and, of course, I probably lost it much more than some of the other Scottish people right here in Cheyenne—like Marty and George Reed—because they're together all the time. But I went to work immediately at the bank with the public, speaking to the public. Naturally, when you're living in the South in Texas, in a few months they've got a slight Texas accent, you know. This kind of thing. Same with me. The Scottish accent kinda' drifted, didn't go very far, but like Don Mahoney said—it was so funny. When he put me into a cage the first time he said, "Fine, but can she talk English?" They just liked to tease me.

Junge: [Laughs]. Did you see that 23rd Psalm?

Richardson: Yeah.

Junge: Now that's the 23rd Psalm in what, would you say?

Richardson: I would say in the broad Scots.

Junge: In the broad Scots.

Richardson: We're pretty clever in Scotland. Some of us speak three languages and people in the West on the islands speak the Gaelic. They also speak the broad Scots, and we also speak English, so most people can understand us. We may have a slight accent on it but we speak English.

Junge: Can you speak Gaelic?

Richardson: No.

Junge: But you can speak broad Scots.

Richardson: Yeah. [unintelligible] You automatically fall back into it.

Junge: Would you mind reading this?

Richardson: I can try it. [reads 23rd Psalm in Scottish brogue].

Junge: That's beautiful.

Richardson: How much did you understand? [laughs]. A few words here and there?

Junge: Yeah, a few words here and there that I understood; however, the rhythm of it is very familiar and I think the lilt is really nice.

Richardson: You get different accents throughout Scotland. You can go twenty-five-thirty miles and get a different accent on it. You get the highlanders that speak with a very soft lilt, like [speaks softly] “There’s a halo ‘round the moon.” You get down into Glasgow like, as I said, the Reeds come from the West Coast. Their accent is much stronger than mine. You get down into the borders where life boats are from. I remember the first time I ever rode a parade in [unintelligible] in Galashiels. I must have been about twelve. There was a young man on a horse. He was having a great deal of trouble with it and—he was a handsome young man—it was fine until he opened his mouth. Then he said, “This horse *wanna gang*. Get me another horse.”

Junge: [Chuckles]

Richardson: That’s your borders.

Junge: I want to show you a slip of paper here. Here’s a description of this project. Now I want you to read the third paragraph.

Richardson: The third paragraph. In the English I speak now? [laughs]

Junge: Until you find something unusual, just read it like you would read—just the third paragraph.

Richardson: [reads:] “Plans call for the completion of the project in the summer of 1991 and publication of the book by the fall of 1993. However, as poet Robert Burns once said, “The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft aglay and lea’ e us nought but grief and pain for promised joy.”

Junge: And I won’t even refer to the way...

Richardson: Hey. That was funny. That was funny, really funny.

Junge: I thought you’d get a kick out of that. [laughs]

Richardson: That’s how it should have been writ, but [we’re up pretty tight that night?] and it was almost the end.

Junge: [Laughs]

Richardson: Whew.

Junge: [Laughs] When you came over here, Dorothy, did you know that you had a job?

Richardson: No.

Junge: How did you get a job?

Richardson: I had worked in the bank in Scotland. I had also been drafted out of the bank. Of course, it was during the war and I had signed up for the WRNS, the naval service, my father was a naval officer.

Junge: The WRNS?

Richardson: The Women's Royal Naval Service. My father had been recalled back to India when the war started. He had just retired the year before. I was about to report when word came, "We need people in ammunitions." So, I was drafted into ammunitions. So I went to work in a firm in Edinburgh that was making ammunition lockers and repairing the boom defense on the Firth of Forth for the Navy. So I was doing costing for the admiralty.

Junge: What is the Firth of Forth?

Richardson: The Firth of Forth is the river that runs from central Scotland through Sterling, north of Edinburgh, out to the sea. A Firth is the river mouth and Forth is the name of the river—F-o-r-t-h.

Junge: So, you were working there.

Richardson: I was working there, yes. Once you were put in these jobs you were not allowed to leave. All young women were drafted.

Junge: But you got out.

Richardson: I got out because when the war ended in 1945 I immediately started to make plans to come to America and my aunt and uncle said, "God bless. Come on."

Junge: And their name was?

Richardson: Their name was Richardson. My uncle was my father's youngest brother.

Junge: Were they pretty well ensconced in this community?

Richardson: Yes. They came in 1923 and they had followed my aunt's brother who was Donald Sinclair, who was married to one of the Nimmos—Jean Nimmo. Her four brothers were out here in Wyoming. The first one,

Alex, had come out in 1881 raising cattle. His brother, Dave, followed him in 1890. In Edinburgh, they had been in the cattle business. They had been in the butcher business.

Junge: It was nice, then, wasn't it to be able to come to a community that had the Scots' traditions and some Scots people.

Richardson: There were some Scots people here. All the Nimmo men, of course, were gone by the time I arrived. Mrs. Dave Nimmo was still alive. That was Jean Dubois's mother.

Junge: Were these people characters? What kind of people were they?

Richardson: I don't know—just lovely, hard-working, loving people. Hard-working, that's for sure. My Uncle Don had never quite lost his Scottish accent, and, of course, my Aunt Mary, she was actually American-born. Her father had come out as a young man to New York with his wife and settled in New York. He was a professional singer and he also worked in the book business. They had four children, a boy who was Donald Sinclair, and three daughters. One of them was Mary, my aunt, by marriage. Her mother died with the fifth baby. Her father knew he was dying of tuberculosis. He took his young family back to Scotland, and he died about six weeks after he got there, and he left his four children with his sister to be brought up in Edinburgh. My aunt married my Uncle Willie in, I think, 1919 and in 1923 they came back to Wyoming. Well, they followed her brother, who had followed his wife's brothers, so they kind of followed one another over here.

Junge: Uh-huh. Wyoming has a very interesting Scots element to its history, don't you think?

Richardson: A lot of them came here. Many Scots came over here in the early eighteen hundreds after what we called "the clearances" in Scotland. Now much of Scotland was owned by wealthy families.

Junge: Clearances? What is that?

Richardson: What happened was that these people who owned land—particularly after the Battle of Culloden, which was the last stance the Scots made to try and get the Stuart throne back from the German element that was now reigning in Britain. Many of these landlords were English. People had lived on a wee plot of land in a little house and maybe two or three cattle, maybe some sheep, and did a little farming. They were called crofters, kind of like what were called homesteaders here—crofters. They didn't own the land and they didn't own anything, really. They did the work for the landlord.

Junge: Tenant farmers.

Richardson: Tenant farmers, right. Okay, these people, the lairds finally decided—the landowners—that it was going to be cheaper to run sheep and much more profitable than to have these people on their land. So they burnt their little cottages and ran them off and so many of these people went direct from Scotland over to Ireland to get ships. Many of them went to Australia, to Canada, to the United States. This is where you get a lot of them coming over to start with. But, as I said, the Scots have always been wanderers. Many of these young men who had been second sons and things like this, or after Culloden.... Scotland and France had always been very tight together. The common enemy was England. Many of these young men went into the forces in these different lands—Russia, France, Germany—as soldiers. Scots have always been known as very good fighters, very fine fighters. And they made a name for themselves. Many of the fine generals in Russia are Scots. The French royal family had a Scots guard—people they could trust—around them. These kind of people—as I said, we wandered—and statesmen, lot of them, went down to England. The Bank of England was started by a Scotsman. I've got a lovely piece—I can't remember where it is right now—but all the different things the Scots have done. Alexander Graham Bell—Scotsman; Simpson, Dr. Simpson, penicillin; the *Wealth of Nations*, the big book about the wealth of nations, by Smith—Scotsman; Sir Walter Scott, very fine novelist; the poet, Robert Burns, his works have been translated into almost any language in the world.

Junge: Why—before we go on here, and this is an interesting story and I don't want you to lose your trail of thought here, but—why do Scottish societies, like the Scottish Society of Southeastern Wyoming, why do they tend to hone in on Robert Burns?

Richardson: He is special. He was a man for everybody, for the common man. He was a young man who was born in 1759 to farming people—hard-working, poor farming people. But again, his father tried to see that he got a little education. This was always the thing about Scots. They wanted their children or themselves to get as much learning as they could. Always trying to get one step ahead, unlike—. As I said, my father was in India for so long. Indian caste system, you are born in an Indian caste system, you don't rise above it. Even to this day they don't get a chance to. The Scots will always take what chances are given to them. So, Robert Burns got what education he could. What he didn't learn—he was only in school for a few years—but he made an impression on dominee—that's Scottish for teacher, "dominee"—they helped him read, to study and he put this all to good use. It was born into him that he could write poetry, and he wrote not only in the broad Scots he also wrote in English as we know it today.

Not all his poems are broad Scots. He was a loyalist. He believed in the Jacobian cause, which, of course, by that time was lost, really. He wrote for all peoples. He wrote for the common people and then when his poems suddenly became popular in Edinburgh he was mixing with the elite in Edinburgh.

Junge: So he cut across all—

Richardson: He cuts across everything.

Junge: All strata of society.

Richardson: All strata. His works have been translated. Robert Burns dinners are celebrated in Russia, in Japan and, of course, in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and America because that's where there are Scots.

Junge: I have a feeling, though, it also has to do with what talents he had as a writer, as a poet.

Richardson: Oh, fantastic talent. It was God-given. You don't learn that.

Junge: Is there something about his poetry that strikes a resonant chord in the hearts of Scots?

Richardson: Yes. It's for everything. I mean, as Marty and I always said, if we were to be turned loose on a desert island and were told to take three books, one would be the Bible 'cause the Scots are a religious people, Robert Burns 'cause that would cover everything you would want to know, and I haven't quite made up my mind for the third one as yet.

Junge: [Laughs]

Richardson: These are two. In any Scottish household you'll probably find a book of Burns.

Junge: Do you have a favorite Burns poem?

Richardson: I think probably my favorite is "To a Mountain Daisy." Now Marty's is "To a Mouse."

Junge: Now, tell me who Marty is.

Richardson: Marty Reed.

Junge: Is she the one that was sort of a co-master of ceremonies with you?

Richardson: Yes. She gave the “Immortal Memory”. Marty is the wife of George “Scotty” Reed.

Junge: This was a banquet held out at Little America you’re referring to. This is for the sake of posterity. You’re referring to the banquet that was held last...

Richardson: Twenty-fifth of January.

Junge: Twenty-fifth of January, Robert Burns Day—or his birthday, rather, right?

Richardson: Absolutely.

Junge: And Marty Reed was there as well as you. You were the master of ceremonies.

Richardson: Well, yes.

Junge: But I got this really, really, strong heartfelt feeling from her expressing her love for Robert Burns.

Richardson: She comes from Burns country, too, which makes a difference. And, of course, we were all brought up with the poems of Robert Burns. She being West Coast and maybe I was probably brought up in a household maybe a little more affluent than Marty. Her people were hard-working people. As I said, my father was a naval officer. I went to boarding school. We did a great deal of Shakespeare, of the English poet, Keats, and, of course, Byron, who, of course, is Scots—Burns. We learned the French, we learned the Latin, we learned the geography. Things like that.

Junge: Classic education.

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: Do you have that poem in this book on the daisy?

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: Is it a very long poem?

Richardson: It’s quite long to read it.

Junge: Do you know what your favorite part of it is?

Richardson: Well, I think just the whole thing. Page 113—it shows his great love of nature ‘cause he had been a farmer, not a very successful one. And, of

course, he died at the age of 37. And many people said he died as a drunkard but, really, we think that the very hard life he spent as a young man, as a child—soaked to the skin half the time working in the field—gave him what we would call rheumatic fever. And, of course, he did enjoy drinking and that doesn't help really. But, as I said, his first verse says—I'll read it more in English so you can understand what I'm saying.

Junge: Okay, and this is called what?

Richardson: This is called “To a Mountain Daisy.”

Junge: Well, can you just do a couple of paragraphs in the way it should be read and then we can go back over it.

Richardson: Yes. It's on turning one down with the plow, he'd been plowing, in April 1786. He says,

*Wee, modest crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour,
For I maun crush among the stoure
Thy slender stem
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonie gem*

Now, translated into English so you can understand it:

Wee, modest, well small, modest, crimson-tipped flower (daisy, little white flower with a red edge around it, tiny, wee thing)

You've met me in an evil hour,

For I must crush among the earth

Thy slender stem

To spare thee now (or to spare thee)—is past my power,
(‘cause he's turning it over with the plow)

You beautiful gem

It's a pretty, pretty thing.

Junge: It's amazing what words will do.

Richardson: It really is. As I say, there's a poem, or a verse or a song for every conceivable thing you can think of. Now everybody knows some Burns.

Every New Year's Eve everybody all over the world sings, *Auld Lang Syne*.

Junge: That's Burns?

Richardson: That's Burns.

Junge: Why do you think that that became—or do you know why that became—the traditional song to sing on New Year's Eve?

Richardson: Well, I suppose *auld lang syne*—memories of long past. So when you come to the end of the year and you're thinking of the new year you're thinking of what's happened the year before, of the year that's just past you. It's memories of the year that's just gone. That's *auld lang syne*, old past memories.

Junge: It really brings out tears in a lot of people. You don't have to be Scots.

Richardson: Particularly Scots. We're a very sentimental race, really, touched.

Junge: Why do you suppose that is so?

Richardson: I suppose part of our Celtic heritage.

Junge: Do you think it has anything to do with the terribly harsh life?

Richardson: I think [unintelligible] harsh life. That, I think, is why many of the Scots left the country. You had to be awfully strong to be able to stand it, and it is a harsh life and the climate is harsh.

Junge: When you came out here, though, you didn't come out to an environment that was Tampa, Florida here, either.

Richardson: No, but I loved it. It didn't rain. [laughs] You know, it rains an awful lot over there. I always tease people when it rains a couple days here. I say "I got my webbed feet back."

Junge: [Chuckles]

Richardson: And another thing—people laugh at me here. I love the snow and when it rains I say, "Oof, I hate the rain. I'd rather have snow." ... "Why?" I say, "Rain is wet. You really get soaked with rain." Snow—

Junge: You can brush it off.

Richardson: Yeah.

Junge: Uh-huh. Did it take you a little while to get used to Wyoming?

Richardson: Yes, in a way. Of course, it was completely different from Scotland. Scotland is a very small country. It's one third the size of Wyoming to start with.

Junge: I didn't realize that.

Richardson: Very small, about 30,500 square feet [miles?].

Junge: And how many people?

Richardson: About three million.

Junge: Are they mainly farmers?

Richardson: No. There was the [unintelligible] industry. Of course, some of the finest wool and tweed in the world comes from Scotland.

Junge: Now talk about that just a little bit because that tradition, the wool industry or the sheep industry, was one in which the Scots seemed to evolve or get into.

Richardson: Again, it's because of the climate. Sheep are pretty hardy and so are the cattle and they're small. We call them highland cattle. They're quite small. They've got long, long hair. They've got horns like a longhorn—Texas longhorns—but they're very, very hardy. You can turn them out the same as the sheep and they weather well. So sheep not only gave you wool to make clothes, to make cloth, to keep you clothed, they also gave you food.

Junge: But the Scots' tradition in the agricultural industry in Wyoming is not just as shepherds, I take it, or is it? Is their tradition in financing sheepherding or what?

Richardson: Well, a lot of Scots came out here to run sheep 'cause they knew sheep. They also came out, of course, to run cattle. And, as you know, the Swan Land and Cattle Company was one of the biggest ranches in the country which was down by Chugwater there.

SIDE B

Richardson: The Swan Land and Cattle Company was financed by Scottish money. In Edinburgh there was a very large printing works called Nelson's that did

all the printing, in fact all the books that were ever published in Scotland. There were three brothers. There was the old man and then he had three sons who were all in the business. In Edinburgh they had huge printing works very close to where my grandparents lived and the three sons had built three beautiful homes and the top of one of them was a replica of a tiny, wee cottage which was to remind them of their humble beginnings. That was turned into a girl's boarding school. That was the first school I went to as a child called St. Trinnian's.

Junge: St. Trinnian's?

Richardson: St. Trinnian's, yes. But anyway, the money from the printing works was sent over here to finance the cattle business in Wyoming. John Clay was one of the first people who came over here as the bookkeeper and, as he says in his book *My Life on the Ranch*, "When the storms came here to wipe so many of the cattle out, the worst thing a Scotsman could do was to go back to a Scotsman and stand on his doorstep and tell him he's lost all of his money." But hundreds and hundreds of thousands of pounds were sent over to this country, to Wyoming particularly, in the cattle business from Scotland.

Junge: You could say, in a way, that the influence, the Scots' influence, in Wyoming maybe outweighed their numbers.

Richardson: Yes, very much so. Very much so. Now Scotty Jack, who was well known in Wyoming politics, he came from Edinburgh. He was a young man who came out here in his late teens. He came to Lusk. His father had come out before him and had not made a success. Unfortunately, he was a little bit too fond of the bottle. Scotty came out here to a drunken father, but he made a go of it and became very high up in Wyoming politics.

Junge: So, it wasn't just the agricultural industry, cattle and sheep, that the Scots got involved in.

Richardson: No (unintelligible) for money, the bankers, the Stockgrowers National Bank was started practically with all Scots' money. John Clay and Andrew Gilchrist. Now Andrew Gilchrist came out here as a young man; first went to Boston. He was in the linen business. Of course, there was a lot of linen done in Scotland as well, in flax. He came out as a young man to Boston, was very successful in business, went back to Ayrshire where he was from, married his sweetheart, Mary, and brought her back to the Boston region—very successful there. One night he went to a lecture, Horace Greeley talking—"Go West Young man." He went home and he said, "Mary, we're going West." "Oh no, Andrew." They came West to Greeley, Colorado, and Gilchrist was where he settled first. It was named for him. I believe the first bank note that was ever written was down

there. They came up here and they homesteaded up by, actually where the Frances's are now, Shirley Frances and Ed. The old original Gilchrist home was out there.

Junge: Where?

Richardson: Out on Happy Jack, big stone house still there.

Junge: There's a school.

Richardson: Yeah, there was the Gilchrist School named for them. They went into the ranching business, were very successful. He was also in the money business. He was the second, I believe the second, president of the Stockgrowers National bank.

Junge: Why didn't these people run for office?

Richardson: He was in the legislature here, Andrew Gilchrist was.

Junge: Okay.

Richardson: But he died as a young man. He was only in his fifties when he died. They moved into town and the house was where now the Hathaway Building is.

Junge: I thought you said your place was there. Was your aunt and uncle's place there too?

Richardson: Yes, because when my aunt and uncle came to Wyoming in 1923, they hadn't been here very long when Mrs. Andrew Gilchrist, who had been a widow for many, many years, she was in her eighties then, was lying in the hospital at Memorial with a broken hip—very lonely, dying. She learned that this young Scottish couple had arrived in Cheyenne and she said, "I'd like to see them just to hear their tongue." My aunt went up and Mrs. Gilchrist took a great liking to her and to my uncle, who was a very gentle man. And she says to my aunt, "Take me back to my home to die." Well, my aunt, being very green about things here, she had given her keys, went to her home, got some clothes, went to the hospital, dressed her, got a taxi and took her back to her own home. (laughs)

Junge: Did she die there?

Richardson: She died many, many years later.

Junge: At her home?

Richardson: She died actually in California, but she said, "I want you and Willie to stay with me." And they did. They were really her companions and my uncle worked for the railroad when they came here and still did. In 1929, Mrs. Gilchrist said, "I want to go home to Scotland." Mary said, "We'll take you," and they did. People said, when they got on the train down here at Cheyenne, everybody said, "You'll bring her back in a box." Auntie said, "Oh, that's all right, she wants to go home to Scotland. She hasn't been back there since she came as a bride." They went to Scotland. They stayed with my grandparents in Edinburgh. My Uncle Willie drove my father's car, 'cause my father was in India, but he always kept a car, took her all around Scotland--I've got a picture of her sitting on the banks of Loch Lomund—brought her back, that's when she was ninety when she went over to Scotland. She died when she was ninety-three.

Junge: So, she didn't go back to die.

Richardson: She didn't go back to die. One year she talked about, of course, she was a great admirer of Robert Burns too, 'cause, again, she came from Ayrshire, which was Robert Burns country.

Junge: Was the town of Burns named for Robert Burns?

Richardson: I don't think so, no. I think it was probably named for maybe an early pioneer who came out here and homesteaded whose name was Burns.

Junge: Now, tell me the story about the association between Mary Gilchrist, whom you just talked about, and the Burns statue—how that got going.

Richardson: Okay. She was a great admirer of Burns. In fact, the poetry, the book I just read out of, belonged to her. She could quote Burns by the hour, being brought up with it. Very great admirer.

Junge: She really could? She had that great a memory?

Richardson: She really could, absolutely. And she'd always talked about wanting to leave something, some mark, and she owned that little piece of property there on Randall. It was called the Gilchrist Park and she wanted to give it to the City of Cheyenne. And she wanted to put something on it. Somebody said, "Well, put a canon on it." "No, no." Didn't want a canon on it. And I think between she and my aunt talking together, she got the idea: "Well, put a statue of Robert Burns there." Of course, my aunt encouraged her because my aunt was another one who could just quote Burns by the ream always. So they got working at it and I helped Mrs. Gilchrist and it must be done by a Scottish sculptor and his name was Gamley.

Junge: How do you spell that, 'cause there's two different spellings for him. I thought it was Gormly or Gonly.

Richardson: No, I've got it right here. It's Gamley, G-a-m-l-e-y, is his name.

Junge: Okay, 'cause they have J.S. Gormley here. It wasn't. It was Gamley. Okay.

Richardson: Yes and he was a formal Scottish sculptor at that time. We got in contact with him and Mrs. Gilchrist had the money all laid aside for it and he did this beautiful work and he had the statue in Paris where he actually did it and when he had finished with it, he said to his wife, who was also called Mary, he said, "Mary, it's the finest work I've ever done. I'm going to take a rest now. I'm tired." And he lay down and he never woke up again. He died in his sleep.

Junge: Is that a true story?

Richardson: That's a true story. The people of Scotland didn't want to let that statue loose because it was one of the finest that had ever been done. But Mrs. Gilchrist said, "Oh, no, no. It's paid for. It's coming to Wyoming." And it came to Wyoming and it was unveiled in 1928.

Junge: And you have a nice picture there.

Richardson: Yes, I have the original picture.

Junge: Of all the people who took part in-- I suppose it was the dedication.

Richardson: It was the dedication and it was in November, 1928, and she went home in 1929.

Junge: Did you hear about how Mary's reaction was to it? Was she perfectly happy now that she had done what she wanted to do?

Richardson: Oh, yes. She was very, very happy with it and it's a beautiful statue and I think it has the distinction still of being the only statue in the world to Robert Burns given by a single donor free of debt. So many of the statues all around the world of Burns are raised with funds to put them up, but she paid for that, every single dime of it, by herself.

Junge: Do you think that's a unique corner in Cheyenne?

Richardson: It is to me and to Scotsmen.

Junge: Do you go by there very much?

Richardson: Yeah. Quite often. I always check it out in the spring. I always check it out to see how the flowers are doing. And this last year, I even called the mayor because I was very disgusted to see some of those horrible garbage bins sitting right in front of it and I called and I said, "Please move it." Bless his heart. They were moved. I mean you wouldn't put a garbage bin in front of the Esther Morris statue, would you? No. Same thing. (unintelligible).

Junge: Sure, and that's one of the finest statues in the entire state.

Richardson: We think it is and so many people have come here. I remember many, many, many years ago I got a cutting from one of my cousins in Galashiell, she cut it out of the *Scotsman*, which was one of the papers that goes all over the world. (unintelligible) And this journalist had been going across the country and he had stopped in Cheyenne and happened to walk up there and saw this statue of Robert Burns and he went back and wrote quite a piece about the most unlikely place in the world that you would find a statue was in the plains of Wyoming and one time when I went back I looked him up and we had coffee together and he said, "You know, that was the biggest surprise I've ever seen in my life to see a statue of Robert Burns in Cheyenne, Wyoming. (chuckles)

Junge: Was it in the *Kilmarnock Standard*?

Richardson: No, it was *Scotsman*.

Junge: Okay, it was in the *Scotsman*. 'Cause there's an article from the *Kilmarnock Standard*.

Richardson: Kilmarnock. That's where Marty Reed is from. That's her home town.

Junge: Are there ever any kind of gatherings around the statue? Do people ever hold forth, or is it just there?

Richardson: No, it's just there. A couple of years ago, we had a couple of pictures taken with our members of the Scottish Society standing there with their kilts laying a wreath on it and I've laid a wreath on it.

Junge: Going back a step now to the settlement in southeast Wyoming or at least Wyoming with Scots.

Richardson: A lot of them were miners also.

Junge: I was going to ask you about that.

Richardson: Rock Springs, Kemmerer, Hanna. A great many Scots who immigrated came to work in the mine 'cause that's what they had done in Scotland. Great deal of coal mining in Scotland.

Junge: There's quite a tradition there too.

Richardson: Yeah. And, of course, when you're Scotsmen go, ten to one somebody knows how to play the pipes. There's always a piper somewhere. At one time, Rock Springs had a very fine pipe band. Not too many of them were Scottish born. There was a great many Italians among them, but they had a very fine pipe band at Rock Springs.

Junge: Is that a tradition, a pipe band?

Richardson: Just a piper and a pipe band, yes. Mm-hmm. There's quite a few pipe bands in Colorado because there's quite a few second, third generation Scots in Colorado. They have about half a dozen pipe bands in Colorado.

Junge: What about Wyoming?

Richardson: No. They don't have any.

Junge: Years ago there was.

Richardson: Years ago there was one up in Casper and in Rock Springs. But as the people either moved away or they'd die out, not many young people take up the pipes. It takes a long time to learn the pipes, seven years to be a good piper, at least.

Junge: Not a plumber. A piper.

Richardson: A piper. Not a plumber, a piper, right. (both laugh)

Junge: Referring to a little joke there.

Richardson: That was Eric, yeah. That was very smart. He almost flattened me 'cause Eric is usually very sober and you don't ever get a quip like that one out of him that cute.

Junge: This is interesting to me to read a couple of articles in the Archives, their vertical files, about Scots culture in Wyoming and it's interesting to me to read that there was a dying out of Scottish traditions.

Richardson: Very much so.

Junge: And now it seems like you're revivifying the Scottish traditions.

Richardson: Of course, there was a lot of question raised in Scots about the turn of the century, like the Nimmo's and in the 1920's, you know, they were still going strong then, but when they died, their offspring weren't that interested.

Junge: And the culture did die out.

Richardson: Yes, it almost did. There were Scots around here who were very proud. A very dear friend of mine was Alex Johnston and he was a professor of wool at the University of Wyoming for many, many years. Alex came from the Glasgow region and was sent out here as a young man in his late teens to die. He had bronchial problems. He came out to Wyoming, he herded sheep for years up around the Red Desert and up Rawlins, Lander way--studied, took correspondence courses from the university, got a degree, ended up as a professor of wool at the University of Wyoming.

Junge: There was another professor of wool at the university. His name was Bob Burns.

Richardson: Right.

Junge: Did you know Bob?

Richardson: I met him, yes. But Alex was a very close friend. He and his brother, Norman, they had both come and they both married Scottish girls. Now Mrs. Norman Johnston is still alive over in Laramie. Alex married a lady by the name of Nan, and Nan had sung with my father and my uncle in choirs in church in Edinburgh.

Junge: How far back could you trace the renaissance of—what am I trying to say --Scottish traditions, Scottish culture?

Richardson: Here in Wyoming?

Junge: Yeah.

Richardson: Well, actually in the early eighteen hundreds because, of course, we have a very famous Scotsman by the name of Sir William Drummond Stuart who was a Scottish laird. He was the second son of a Scottish laird Perthshire, Scotland and as a second son, of course, he was not going to come into the family estate. He was in the army. He was in the Battle of Waterloo, no it was the Crimea. When he got out of the army, he was retired from the army when he was just in his late twenties. He was a great sportsman. He loved to hunt and he spent a time in Europe hunting and, of course, being second son, he was given a certain amount of money

to travel a little bit. He had about four brothers and only one he got along with. And his older brother, who would naturally come into the family estate when his father died, hated him. But young Stuart married. He came across a very lovely lassie one time and married her eventually and had one son, George. And then when the (unintelligible) was dying out in Europe, he decided—by this time, his father had died and his brother was now the earl, the laird. There was an amount of money given to William, but his brother was very tight with it. He didn't like him and they had a great big row and young William said never, never would he sleep under the family roof again. He came out to America (unintelligible) to New York first, a very handsome young man, probably in his early thirties by this time, made quite a name for himself and came out to St. Louis, got in tow with Fremont and there was companies coming out here to the West, mountain men—among them Jim Bridger. He joined them, left (unintelligible) but was a very fine marksman with the rifle and he fell right in with them, with the Indians. He went to many of the rendezvous in Green River.

Junge: Were there Scots fir trappers?

Richardson: There were many Scots fir trappers. They had started out originally with the Astor Company on the west coast and one of the first ones was the name of Stuart who had come across the northern part meeting from the west coast to St. Louis.

Junge: Robert Kendall.

Richardson: Yeah, and Stuart. Anyway, so there had been Scotsmen around and there had been many Scotsmen who were fir trappers and he fell in with them, became very, very good friends of Jim Bridger and also a half breed by the name of Antoine Clement, who was French-Canadian and also Indian. So when he went back to St. Louis, he got in with another young man and between them they really made quite a haul with cotton. When he was out here, his brother died, but Sir William took a whole year before he decided to go back to take over the lands and to run the earldom back there and the truth is he never did sleep under that roof. He had a special part built on.

Junge: There's no hatred like a family hatred.

Richardson: Absolutely. Absolutely. Now when he went back, he took with him his half-breed companion, Indians. He had buffalo shipped over-- elk, deer, antelope. He took the seeds of all different kinds of trees from this part of the country and they're still standing back there.

Junge: Really?

Richardson: Yes. When I was home three years ago, I had the great honor of being allowed to go through Murthly Castle, which is the family home. My friend, Joyce Hunter, who was out here, one of her friends had tutored the present earl's, or present laird's, two daughters and, of course, Janice had mentioned that I was visiting and was from Wyoming and was so interested in William Drummond Stuart and the present laird said, "Invite her to the castle so she can see it." So, I got to go through it and as you go in the front door, there was two of the most god-awful chairs—hand carved buffalo heads with real buffalo horns and real buffalo hooves from some of the original buffalo that went over there. There was a park named Buffalo Park in Perthshire near Murthly Castle and I believe the last buffalo died off about the turn of the century.

Junge: What were your thoughts when you saw these things?

Richardson: Fantastic. Now the same Drummond Stuart was the man who had taken Alfred Jacob Miller, the painter, with him. The very first paintings were made in this part of the country by Miller. Drummond Stuart took Miller back with him to Scotland as well. The (unintelligible) were painted there and I saw one of the originals hanging in the castle.

Junge: What a thrill.

Richardson: Fantastic. To think that I was stepping on the same boards that William Drummond Stuart had lived in. That was his home. I saw his bathroom and the new bathroom he had built. Very modern in those days, with a shower and everything (chuckles) in the eighteen hundreds. I had been to the Green River to a rendezvous at one time and I walked on the same steps. This is fantastic.

Junge: What you are saying is that there is a Scottish thread going throughout Wyoming's history.

Richardson: And this is why I have such a great love of the American Indians here. We've got a lot in common and even got some words in common, which is fantastic. We were both—they lived in tribes, we lived in clans. We had chiefs over us, we were both run off our land. We've got a lot in common.

Junge: That's interesting. Do you tell that to the kids?

Richardson: You bet I do.

Junge: What fascinates you about the Indians?

Richardson: I just always have had a great admiration for them. They had a wonderful culture, which, like ours after, as I said, the Battle of Flodden the English tried to stamp out the Scots. They weren't allowed to wear cotton, they weren't allowed to wear kilts, they weren't allowed to play bagpipes. All weapons were taken from us. They tried to stamp us out. That's what happened to the Indians over here.

Junge: Don't people wonder sometimes or ask you sometimes what a Scots woman is doing in Indian garb?

Richardson: Absolutely. Absolutely. A great many of the Scots who came over here, particularly your trappers, married Scots, Scots married full-blooded Indians. I had very good friends who lived in Nebraska, no, South Dakota near Carter. Their name was Colombe. Their grandfather was a full-blooded Scotsman and their grandmother was a full-blooded Sioux Indian. Charming people. They, too, were college-educated. They got the chance and took the education and so many Indians didn't give them a chance. But, again, you're getting so many of the Indians now that put them down so much. Luckily, some of it's coming back. The pride is coming back, which is wonderful.

Junge: Mm-hmm. It is.

Richardson: And the beadwork, which I was so interested in too. It's being taught to the younger generation.

Junge: Has anybody ever noticed that you had this Scottish accent. Is there any story connected with that?

Richardson: Oh, yes. The kids, you know, they wonder where I'm from. Fourth graders often say, "You talk funny."

Junge: Well now, when I was asking you about this renaissance of culture, I think I probably misstated what I was trying to get across, but it seems to me that in recent days, I don't know, maybe you could pinpoint it, I don't know, the last twenty--twenty-five years, maybe less than that, there has been this re-birth and renaissance of Scots people in Wyoming advocating the culture, the Scots culture.

Richardson: Well, I don't think it's even that far back. Actually, our Scottish Society here in Wyoming is only about ten years old.

Junge: Oh.

Richardson: Yes, and that actually was really brought up again by Kay and B.,G. McNab. Now McNab, he's about a third or fourth generation Scot, but

they had been going to the gatherings down in Estes for a long time and, of course, again, third or fourth generation Scots, he had been getting into the roots of the McNab's and had gone to many of these gatherings and said, "Hey, we've got some Scots people right here, let's get it going." So, we had a picnic about ten years ago. About one hundred odd people came. A lot of people came just for sheer curiosity because they had the pipes and everything else and so we organized and it's, as I said, now there's probably about a dozen of us who are first-born Scots in the club right now in the Society.

Junge: What is your position?

Richardson: I'm president.

Junge: Why are you the president? Why not somebody else?

Richardson: Well, we've had quite a few presidents, but I've been president for maybe the last three years probably because I've got the gift of the gab. Probably because I'm enthusiastic about it. I don't want it to die again.

Junge: Do you think it will?

Richardson: I hope not.

Junge: Will it take first-born Scots to keep it going?

Richardson: I hope not. I hope we're getting enough interest that...

Junge: Do you see it growing?

Richardson: Well, we've got sixty members just this last Burns Day that we had. And they don't have to be Scots-born. They don't even have to have Scots in them as long as they have an interest and a love that they want to know more about the Scottish way of life—our music, our poetry, our way of life, our past history. Our history is very old. You know. We were going when the Normans came over, when the Romans came before 55 B.C. when the Romans came into Briton. They built walls to keep the Scots out. They never quite could get a handle on us. Same with the English. They spent centuries trying to beat us down, but we've always come back.

Junge: What is it...

Richardson: Resilience, stubbornness—a great deal of it is pure stubbornness. Oh, God, are we stubborn.

Junge: One of the traditions—and I don't know how it got started or where or when—but one of the traditions is that Scots are tight, fiscally conservative.

Richardson: Yeah. We're not really tight. We're not tight. We have a great deal of respect for money. We want our money's worth. We don't spend money—well, we can spend money like a drunken sailor given the chance, but we like our money's worth. We're conservative with our money. We want to put it to good use. Most of the jokes come from Scotland. That's where they originate from.

Junge: There are Irish, there are Germans and there are probably Vietnamese, there are probably Japanese who are also fiscally conservative who like to watch their investments very carefully.

Richardson: Absolutely, but the Scots make fun of it. That's where most of the jokes come from. I had a lovely joke to tell on Burns night, and never got to it, but, as I said, they were having celebrations all over the world the same night. Tom Sutherland, the gentleman from Ft. Collins who was released, who was a hostage, he was celebrating Burns supper and I think was a principal speaker at one of the clubs in Glasgow. There was a lovely story about the gathering in Fiji, the Fiji Islands many, many, many, many years ago and the master of ceremonies was a great big Fiji chief, pure Fiji, and he was going to give the Immortal Memory and to introduce himself he had to tell the audience a little bit about himself. "Pure Fiji," he said, but he did have a little Scots in him because his grandfather had eaten a Presbyterian missionary. Lovely story. (laughs)

Junge: You know, it's really curious to me, uh...

Richardson: The Scots have a great love of ridiculous. We also have a great love of the supernatural.

Junge: Really?

Richardson: Oh my, yes. We all know about (unintelligible) and fairies and wee folk and all of that. We have a great deal of respect for them and they're not ghosts.

Junge: And also, one of the loch...

Richardson: The Loch Ness monster, Nessy. Absolutely. We just hope nobody ever catches her 'cause she's been going for hundreds of years, thousands of years, in fact. Saint Colombo was supposed to have seen a monster there. Loch Ness is a very, very deep loch, lake to you, loch. They don't know how deep it is. It could be that it goes all the way out to sea because you

can go from the east part of Scotland from Inverness down to Ft. William, which is on the west coast. There's lochs all the way along and they have built the Caledonian Canal in between it so you can take a small boat or they used to use the little tow boats. We'd go from one coast to the other right down. We believe that Loch Ness is so deep that probably some of the caverns go right out to the sea. How many of us know what's at the bottom of the ocean. You know, we think there's fish or prehistoric animals down there.

Junge: We were talking about frugality and this is interesting to me. I never realized that maybe this came from Scots talking about other Scots.

Richardson: Yes, also. And times were tight and they had to make do with what they had, so they spread it as far as they could.

Junge: But would you say that that's the way Scots people are is frugal, tight-fisted?

Richardson: No. We've very generous and we're extremely friendly people. I know during the war when the G.I.'s were over there, most of them were stationed in England, they used to come up to Scotland on their leaves. They said they felt more at home with the Scots than they did the English. English are apt to be a wee bit hoity-toity, you know. When Scots go to another country from way back they immediately got in with the peoples they inter-married, became part of them. They never forgot they're Scots, but they mingled with the people. English always thought they were a little shade better. That's the difference.

Junge: Mm-hmm. So they are down-to-earth people?

Richardson: We're very down-to-earth, and we're very-very friendly. People go over there and visit, they love Scotland because people will stop to ask somebody about something or even if you're in a place and Scots hear you say, "I wonder where..." they'll say, "Can I help, can I tell you about it." You know, they're that kind of people.

Junge: How often do you go back?

Richardson: About every two years. It took me nine years. When I came out in 1947, it was 1956 before I went back the first time. It was 1965 before I went back the second time. I was working in the bank for one hundred dollars a month, so it takes quite a while to save enough money to go back.

Junge: Did you retire at the bank?

Richardson: I retired at the bank.

Junge: Which bank was this now?

Richardson: It was originally Stockgrowers National Bank and then became the First National Bank and Trust and then became Norwest and then became Wyoming National Bank and it's now again Norwest.

Junge: Is it the same bank that you started out?

Richardson: No way. No way.

Junge: What's the difference, basically.

Richardson: Well, now, of course, Norwest is just a very small tadpole in a very big puddle. They've lost our identity completely. The bank was started originally for the stockmen in this country, in Wyoming.

Junge: And you started there when?

Richardson: 1947.

Junge: And it was still Stockgrowers.

Richardson: Yes.

Junge: Tell me, did it still have that atmosphere, the old-time ranchers' society atmosphere?

Richardson: Yes. We were a family, really. We knew our customers. Our officers were gentlemen, gentlemen bankers. Mr. Marble, who was the president when I went there, a charming gentleman, wonderful gentleman. When I first came here, the first day Mr. Kerrigan and Mr. Marble were good friends of my aunt and uncle. They knew this niece was coming and worked at a bank. About the first day or second day I was here, they said, "Bring Dorothy down to the bank." So they took me down there, introduced me, talked with me and that evening Mr. Kerrigan called my aunt and he said, "Send Dorothy down by herself tomorrow morning." So I went down by myself, took me to Mr. Marble's office and Mr. Marble says, "Dorothy, how would you like to work for us?" I think I was too scared to say no. And besides, I wanted to go to work. I didn't want to be a burden on anybody. And my old boss in Scotland sent the most wonderful letter to Mr. Marble when he learned that I had started to work in a bank here and Mr. Marble eventually gave me a copy of that letter. And when I went home the first time, he said, "Now, you've only got two weeks' vacation." He said, "You'll need more time." He said, "How about taking a month's leave of absence so you can see everybody." They

wouldn't do that now. They were wonderful, wonderful people to work for.

Junge: When did you retire?

Richardson: In 1985. Different place altogether now.

Junge: Yes. I hate to say it was inevitable, but sometimes I think it is.

Richardson: Well it happens.

Junge: Well, society changes.

Richardson: Society changes. I was there the best years. I loved that. As I say often, I lived the best years even through the war and those years. They were sad years, but they were also happy years. We were together.

Junge: Mm-hmm. Did you maintain all those years close ties to other Scots people in Cheyenne?

Richardson: Of course, my aunt and uncle and, of course, all the Nimmo's. Jean Dubois likes to call me a shirttail relative. I'm always included in the family gatherings, things like that. As soon as Scots people come here—I met a very good friend, a young lady, well, it was many, many years ago, I was working in the bank. One Saturday morning it was pouring rain. There was a young lady with a raincoat on and a hood on and she steps up to the window and she says, "Are you the girl from Scotland?" and I said, "What part of Glasgow are you from?" She says "I'm not from Glasgow." And I said, "You couldn't miss that accent." She was from out at the Base. She said her name was (Dora Lees?). She was a nurse. She'd just come out to the Base. She had been to one of the stores here and one of the ladies in the store says, "Have you met the Scottish girl who works in the bank?" "No." She said, "Well, you can't miss her. She wears long earrings." She came in and asked me and I said, "Give me your telephone number and I'll call you." And a couple of weeks later I called her. I'd lost the telephone number, but I remembered her name." I called the Base and said, "Do you have a Lieutenant Lees out there? She's a nurse." And they came back and said "We have a Captain Lees." I said, "Must be her." So I went up and got her. We've been friends ever since. Now that's thirty-five years ago.

Junge: Mm-hmm. When did you start volunteering at the State Museum?

Richardson: When I retired. The month I retired.

Junge: In '85.

Richardson: In 1985.

Junge: Why did you do that?

Richardson: Well, because I've always loved museums and I love Wyoming history. I've studied it ever since I've come here and this was a way to get into it-- really, really get into it. And I saw they were going to have a training session for docents—guides-- and I went and I met Donna Bachman and she was lovely and we had two days of training and then she said, "We're going to need a guide. We have some children coming tomorrow. Who will volunteer? There was about a half a dozen of us. Nobody said a word and I said, "I will." I figured, hey, I might as well jump into it right now so I can learn. I loved it ever since.

Junge: Do you like working with kids?

Richardson: I love working with kids. I have never had any kids of my own. I'm Aunt Dot to many kids, particularly over in Scotland. I've always gotten along with kittens and puppies. I get along with wee people too. (both laugh) I love them.

Junge: I'll bet you get some good stories.

Richardson: Oh, they're wonderful and you learn from them all the time. You really do. Their questions are fabulous.

Junge: It's not like they're little adults, but in a way, they're so perceptive about some things.

Richardson: Yeah, they are and that's a wonderful age, it really is.

Junge: And they're taking Wyoming history.

Richardson: Fourth grade Wyoming history.

Junge: How many tours do you do a week?

Richardson: Well, it depends on how many of the schools call and they often call. I take the entire box out to the schools and give programs at the schools themselves.

Junge: Oh.

Richardson: And then very often the wee folk, the three- and four-year-olds—now that's a challenge to hold their attention. You don't give tours to them. I

have my hands-on box. I make them all little princesses and Indian braves, something to hold, tell them little stories.

Junge: It's probably too early to see any long-term results of this, but do you get any feedback. Do people come back to you and say, "I remember back when you told us about—"

Richardson: Oh, yeah. The kids do.

Junge: They recognize you?

Richardson: Oh, they recognize—yeah, mm-hmm.

Junge: How long will you do this?

Richardson: I guess forever as long as it's fun and I love it.

Junge: That's great.

Richardson: I really enjoy it.

Junge: We've got one or two minutes left on the tape. Dorothy, I want to ask you just a couple more questions. Boy, we've talked about everything that I wanted to talk about, but I would like you to tell me a couple of things. First of all, when you're standing out there at that Burns statue, how do you feel? What sort of emotions or ideas flow through you?

Richardson: Pride. Love of both countries, the old and the new.

Junge: Is it a special place to you?

Richardson: Yes, and, see, already I'm getting choked up. Typically Scots. Can't say enough about 'em.

Junge: That's okay.

Richardson: You know.

Junge: That's all right.

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Richardson: It's a wee piece of home right there.

Junge: Mm-hmm. You really do love the Scots' culture, don't you?

Richardson: Yes, I do, but I also love the Wyoming culture. This is history being made right in this state. We're the last of the history actually being made in this

new country. This is a new country, you know. It's only two hundred odd years old, America. We're a very innocent country and history is still being made right here in Wyoming. We're kind of the last bastions of it, don't you feel that?

Junge: Oh, yeah. I think that we're so new to our history out here that we don't realize the importance of certain things.

Richardson: No. I've always said that if I'd come to this country and gone to maybe New York or Chicago, I would have never stayed. I'd have gone back. There's something about Wyoming that reminds me of home. Not the scenery, good grief no, but you know that's why my friends come out here and visit and it's the vastness that really intrigues them and it's the friendliness and it's the same with me. I love the wide open spaces. I love the mountains and, of course, We've got beautiful mountains in Scotland.

Junge: If you could point to one contribution by the Scots to Wyoming that you think is endearing and long-lasting, what would it be? Would it be just what you described?

Richardson: I think so – pride in where they came from and pride in what they've done in this country, in the new country. We don't all make names for ourselves, but we all contribute something to our new homeland.

Junge: Do you think that this is going to lie on to the next century, a hundred years from now?

Richardson: Oh, my God, I hope so, 'cause if these people come from other lands that-- we have a past history and great history that coming to the new land hopefully we'll make this land as great, really.

Junge: Okay. Thanks.

Richardson: You let me ramble, didn't you?

Junge: Well, that's part of it, yeah, letting a person ramble and talk a little bit, but I'd rather do it this way than have a whole list of questions and, you know, you can talk personally about Wyoming history, which is fine with me, but we have a lot of this stuff on paper and there's no sense in you and me just sitting here going over all the people starting with Robert Stuart, Robert Campbell and Alfred Jacob Miller and William Stuart, people like that. It would be repetitive. We might as well do something else. (clock chimes). I like that clock, by the way.

Richardson: That came from Scotland.

Junge: It did?

Richardson: The carpets came from Scotland. My desk—these are all things from home.

Junge: The chair I'm sitting in?

Richardson: I don't think it originally came from Scotland. It belonged to Mrs. Andrew Gilchrist and this one and so did that table over there.

Junge: We don't have anymore time on this tape, but do you think that those people like Mrs. Andrew Gilchrist, Mary Gilchrist, were any different from the people we have today?

Richardson: I don't think so.

Junge: Don't you?

Richardson: No, I think we've got the same strain in us. We're proud of where we came from, made a new life in a new land. We're proud of that. We tried to do our best here.

Junge: People are just as hard-working?

Richardson: I think they are just as hard-working. I think the Scots we have over here are very hard-working.